Recommendations of Institution of Engineers on Electricity Acts

1201. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received the recommendations from the Institution of Engineers that existing Acts are required to be amended suitably to incorporate the positive proposals in the draft Electricity Bill, 2000 and drop the idea of enacting a fresh electricity legislation after scrapping the three existing Acts, of 1910, 1948, and 1998 which are serving the country well;

(b) if so, the details of recommendations made by them; and

(c) Government's reaction in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) While giving detailed comments and recommendations on the proposed Electricity Bill, 2000, the Institute of Engineers have highlighted the need for reforming the present system "where SEBs are providers, regulators and utility itself". It has been *inter alia* suggested that the present set up may be split up on independent (but in a co-ordinated manner) functional basis so as to be totally accountable and transparent in its functioning. Unless the problem of theft is solved urgently, the reforms only will not bring out the desired results. The Institute has, however, favoured suitable amendments in the existing laws rather than the enactment of a new comprehensive legislation to replace the existing laws. The comments of the Institute of Engineers have been duly considered.

Small hydro-power projects

†1202. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of energy being generated and its demand in the country at present;

(b) whether small hydro power projects can prove effective in meeting the demand and supply;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether it is a fact that these projects are likely to safeguard the horror of floods, environment friendly and cheaper than the thermal power plants; and

(d) if so, the States where Government have taken concrete steps to start these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) The energy availability during the period April, 2000 to June, 2000 was 114674 MU against a requirement 124059 MU, thus shortage of 9385 MU (7.6%).

(b) Small Hydro Projects located on small rivers-streams are generally considered very useful for meeting the power requirement of far-flung and remote areas not connected by the grid.

(c) Small hydro projects are environment friendly but are not envisaged for flood contorl. As these projects are located generally in remote hilly terrain, the cost of installation per MW is generally higher than medium and major hydro projects and also thermal projects.

(d) Small hydro power projects have the potential of meeting power requirements in an economical manner in remote and isolated areas. These projects also have the advantage of short gestation periods. Ministry of Non-conventional Energy Sources is promoting development of small hydro power (SHP) projects in the entire country and provides various financial incentives for the development of these projects which include support for detailed survey and investigation, detailed project report preparation, captial subsidy to the State sec or projects, interest subsidy to commercial projects and financial sup ort for the renovation and modernation of old SHP projects.

Amendments in Electricity Acts to Discourage Power Theft

1203. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the provisions in the Electricity Acts to prevent power thefts;

(b) whether the punishment is sufficient to act as deterrent; and

(c) if not, what amendments Government propose to make in this